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Quarterly Report
Fourth Quarter 2003

Applicants Sought for Animal Care Advisory Board Service

Five positions on the Animal Care Facilities Act (ACFA) advisory committee will have terms that expire in January of 2004. The positions represent the following categories:

1. Commercial Breeder: a person who is a commercial animal breeder and who breeds both dogs and cats.
2. Boarding Kennel/Commercial Kennel: a person who operates a commercial kennel or a boarding kennel.
3. Hobby/Show Breeder: a person who meets the definition of hobby or show breeder.
4. Humane Organization: a person who operates or is employed by an animal humane society or other humane organization.
5. Pet Shop: a person who operates a pet shop and who sells both dogs and cats.

The ACFA advisory committee was established to assist the director in establishing rules and to provide ongoing review of the administration of the Animal Care Facilities Act. Advisory committee members receive no compensation or reimbursement for expenses incurred while performing their duties.

Terms last for two years. Interested applicants should write to Dr. Jerry Eber, Veterinarian II, Missouri Department of Agriculture, Division of Animal Health, P.O. Box 630, Jefferson City, MO 65102.

The committee has 13 members and meets quarterly. The next meeting is scheduled for 1 p.m. on January 12, 2004 at the Missouri Department of Agriculture building, 1616 Missouri Boulevard, Jefferson City. Appointments will be determined after the January meeting.

Missouri Department of Agriculture Raises Money for Pet Care Fund

The 10th annual Missouri Department of Agriculture golf tournament was held October 4 at Sycamore Creek Golf Club in Osage Beach. Twenty-two teams played in the tournament, which raised more than \$1,400 for the Jefferson City Animal Rescue Shelter and the Brenna Seibert Memorial Pet Care Fund.

The Department of Agriculture gives special thanks to Jim Kahrs of Sycamore Creek and Osage Catfisheries who hosted this year's tournament and provided a fish fry at the end of the day.

Missouri Pet Breeders Hold Convention in Columbia

The Missouri Pet Breeders Association held their 10th annual Fall MPBA Educational Seminar in Columbia October 17-18. Speakers included Dr. Robert Page, Dr. Jerry Eber and Karen Strange. Speakers focused on animal health issues, regulatory updates and proposed legislation.

The Missouri Pet Breeders Association hosts an annual spring seminar in Springfield and an annual fall seminar in Columbia. Sister organizations exist in Arkansas, Oklahoma, Kansas and Iowa.

USDA, Kansas, Iowa and Missouri Hold Joint Conference

Approximately 50 state and federal animal care professionals met November 19 and 20 to give program updates, reinforce emphasis for cooperation between state and federal agencies, discuss problem topics, and work toward uniform interpretation of inspection standards. State and federal employees from across the Midwest attended the conference.

The USDA, Missouri Department of Agriculture, Kansas Animal Health Department and Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship each gave updates on the status of their programs. The USDA reported that the Doris Day Animal League lawsuit was judged in their favor upon appeal. It was estimated that this would have affected 1.6 million sites (mostly homes) that sell dogs or cats retail.

The USDA is waiting on the Department of Justice to determine how to meet the Electronic Freedom of Information Act requirements, while maintaining security concerns of licensees. USDA estimates that approximately 30 facilities apply for a license each month within the state of Missouri alone.

Dr. Jerry Eber discussed recent activity in the ACFA program. Debra Duncan presented an overview of the Kansas program. Dr. Dave Shmitt explained how the Iowa program works.

Discussion also focused on the need for state and federal cooperation. A recent case was used as a model for discussion. Slides and reports were shared with the audience.

On the second day, speakers focused on dog auctions, movement of underage pups, Internet sales and flea markets. State and federal staff members from Missouri have been attending the auctions regularly. While there have been exceptions to the rule, most of the patronizing public follow the regulations.

Movement of underage puppies continues to be a subject of great interest and discussion. USDA does not allow the movement of pups prior to eight weeks of age unless a variance has been granted. Anecdotal evidence shows that Internet sales are on the rise. Dr. Robert Gibbens reported that the USDA views the Internet the same as any other media and added that the determining factor for USDA jurisdiction lies in the nature of the sale (wholesale vs. retail). Dr. Eber explained that ACFA involvement would be dependent upon where the dogs are harbored or where the contract is finalized.

Dr. Daniel Jones reported that the USDA has set up a booth at the Canton, Texas flea market, and it has led to more applicants. Kansas requires flea markets to license.

The final few hours were devoted to improving documentation and promoting uniform inspection standards.

Frequently Asked Question: What can I do to improve my operation?

We are always open to questions. Through the use of this column, we hope to answer some questions that are commonly asked of our staff.

Meeting standards outlined in our rules and regulations is a good start, but licensees often want to know how they can acquire additional intellectual resources that will aid in building the success of their operation. There are a number of books that make for good reading and reference, but it has been our experience that the most innovative and effective organizations employ other methods as well. We suggest that dog and cat enthusiasts consult with their attending veterinarian, attend continuing education and network with other professionals.

First, most licensees are required to employ an attending veterinarian under formal arrangements. Few facilities have veterinarians on staff, but most have some type of continuing relationship with their veterinarian. We suggest that all licensees work with their veterinarian to promote their knowledge and put together a program to effectively prevent disease. Licensees that are proactive in this regard consider any additional cost as a financial input and have greater control over cost. In contrast, licensees that are reactive in this regard face resulting expenses with less control over costs.

In addition to veterinarians, there are a number of groups that foster professional development through continuing education. While we do not endorse one particular organization over another, we have used many of them (listed below) to provide training for our own staff. The Professional Pet Association conducts regular seminars geared toward the commercial breeder, hobby-show breeder, dealer and pet shop. Municipal pounds, animal shelters and rescue operations may find helpful information by attending one of the National Animal Control Association schools held in Kansas City and across the United States.

The MU Law Enforcement Training Institute offers cruelty investigations schools for those with investigative and enforcement occupations. When possible, USDA, ACFA and University Extension conduct "Canine Care Workshops" that focus on facilities and veterinary care. Licensees who attend continuing education tend to improve care, reduce problems, further careers and improve their facilities.

Finally, networking with other professionals promotes the exchange of ideas and knowledge. The Missouri Animal Control Association (MACA) holds a convention each September where MACA members can network while continuing their education. The Missouri Pet Breeders Association holds conventions twice per year, giving producers, vendors and retailers a chance to discuss business and listen to speakers.

Operation SPOT holds about three forums per year and draws mostly members that advocate no-kill animal shelters. Hunte Corporation hosts an educational conference in the fall that is well attended by breeders from Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri and Oklahoma. Networking creates an abundance of information, resources and new ideas.

Improving your operation is more than an investment in brick and mortar. Intangible assets are just as important. You can improve your operation by using your attending veterinarian, continuing your education and networking with other professionals. Please see page four, where we have listed contact information for the organizations mentioned above.

Continuing Education Contacts

While we do not endorse one particular organization over another, we have used these groups to provide training for our own staff.

Professional Pet Association
P.O. Box 427
Mexico, MO 65265
(573) 581-4355

National Animal Control Association
P.O. Box 480851
Kansas City, MO 64148
1-800-828-6474

MU Law Enforcement Training Institute
321 Hearn Center
Columbia, MO 65211
(573) 882-6021

United States Department of Agriculture
2150 Centre Avenue, Building B
Mail Stop #3W11
Fort Collins, CO 80526-8117
(970) 494-7478

Missouri Animal Control Association
701 Lower Lake Road
St. Joseph, MO 64504
(816) 271-4878 (ask for Rick Smith)

Missouri Pet Breeders Association
901 Missouri Boulevard #356
Jefferson City, MO 65109
(417) 781-9514

Operation SPOT
P.O. Box 29563
St. Louis, MO 63127
(314) 995-8678

Hunte Corporation
117 Center Point Road
Elkland, MO 65644
1-800-333-3647

Compliance Activity

-A joint USDA and ACFA investigation has led to sanctions against a commercial breeder in Howard County. The dual-licensed facility is accused of violating transport regulations.

-A dealer in Jackson County was fined \$500.00 for selling underage puppies.

-A breeder in Shelby County was forced to sell out after failing six inspections over the course of three months. Citations focusing on lack of veterinary care led to the revocation of the breeder's license.

-An ACFA officer was involved in a multi-agency effort to remove 160 dogs and 32 cats from a Kansas City residence this past quarter. The animals were taken to Kansas City Animal Control after it was discovered that the owners had exceeded the municipal limit of four pets. ACFA staff found no evidence of dogs or cats being entered into commerce, exempting the site from ACFA licensing requirements. We extend thanks to all who helped.

Renewals Due January 31, 2004

ACFA renewal packets were mailed during the month of October. Applications for license/registration renewal are due on January 31, 2004.

Please help our program work more efficiently by renewing your license or registration before the deadline. If you have lost or did not receive your licensing packet, please request a new one at (573) 751-3076.

Contact Us:

acfa@mail.mda.state.mo.us

Phone: (573) 751-3076

Fax: (573) 526-2059